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13 May 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Conference on Government Employees  
Training Act

1. On 28 April 1959 the following persons attended the one-day conference sponsored by the U. S. Civil Service Commission on the Government Employees Training Act:

This conference enabled us to appraise the adequacy of our own interpretation of Public Law 85-507 in the light of authoritative pronouncements and explanations.

2. The conference was divided into two general programs. The morning sessions consisted of an address of welcome by the Hon. Arthur S. Flemming, Secretary of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and effective addresses on the significance of the Training Act by the Hon. Roger W. Jones, Chairman, U. S. Civil Service Commission and Frederick J. Lawton, Commissioner, U. S. Civil Service Commission. The afternoon sessions covered three broad areas of discussion led by experts from the Civil Service Commission.

3. Mr. Jones' remarks were of general interest, mainly pertaining to the use of training by top management. He categorized training as a specific function of top management and stated that only by the development of skills could management meet the dual responsibility of benefiting both personnel and the agency. He further defined one aspect of management as the development of people and stated that it has been proven that human effort and ingenuity can be stretched because people are engineered to grow, but machines have definite limitations. Another observation was that the Civil Service inspectors have found that supervisory training is sadly neglected throughout the federal service. A thought that brought to mind the Senior Officers Course was Mr. Jones' statement that managers unfortunately fail to

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take the medicine (training) prescribed. Most of the talk was in line with the acceptance of training and the job that had to be done to sell top management, and he reiterated that the development of an individual's career can only be the responsibility of management. Most executives manage by restriction and control, whereas training would be a much more useful tool in accomplishing the assigned mission. Mr. Jones was of the opinion that there were definite active executive programs in some of the agencies but suggested that this should increase; for, as he expressed it, when a man reaches the level of GS-12 and above, he should spread his horizons. He complimented the military on the National War College and their other successful training courses which lead to a full and diversified career. He commented that the British have a staff college for civilians which presents a four-month course; the French have a three-year school of administration; and the Brazilians have a two-year school with four months' study set aside for executives. His key theme seemed to be that managers could be developed. It was the consensus that he presented excellent reasons to bear out his prediction that a Government Staff College is needed and will be established.

4. Mr. Frederick Lawton discussed the Civil Service regulations that implemented the Employees Training Act by reviewing what the regulations permitted and what they required. He and successive speakers stated that there was definite built-in flexibility in the regulations for all agency heads to use. He emphasized that external training can only be performed if Government training is not reasonably available at any Government installation. Agencies under the Act can also provide full-time and part-time training, day or evening classes, correspondence training, workshops, etc. There is no limit of grade level or position that can be provided training. The military, however, cannot receive training under the provisions of the Training Act. Some of the "strings," as Mr. Lawton put it, were that the training has to be related to Government work, that there has to be a need for the training proven by review, and that all agencies must use their own

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resources. He then stressed that training could not be taken to procure a bachelor's degree and that training should not be given for training's sake if other people are already qualified. He also went into detail on the written agreement required from those taking training.

5. In the afternoon, participants met in smaller discussion groups (of 100) to consider the subjects of (a) Out-Service (External) Training; (b) In-Service (within the Government) Training; and (c) Inspection and Reports. Emphasis was placed on computation of hours spent in training, special requirements, and built-in flexibilities. Most of these referred to sections for which the Agency received exceptions under Executive Order 10805. This was particularly true of the inspection and reporting discussion. It might be well, however, to state some of the things the inspectors of the Civil Service Commission will look for when performing their duties in agencies other than CIA. They will inspect to determine what plans and procedures have been established to insure compliance with the law and regulations, what signed agreements are being utilized, what method of listing expenses has been established, and what problems exist. They will also spot check individual cases, not for the purpose of criticism, but to determine how the training program is progressing. It was noted throughout that decisions are going to be made by the agency. Compliance with the provisions of the law is expected, but decisions will not be made by the Commission. In accordance with section 18(a) of the Act, the Commission will require from other agencies an annual report which will include policies and programs, a general assessment of the value of training, and a summary of estimated expenses for out-service training. They suggested that the agencies keep in some form determined by them:

(a) Authority for out-service training of more than forty hours duration (this authority must be written).

(b) A record showing that trainees do not exceed 1 per cent of the agency's strength.

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- (c) A record of written agreements made by employees.
- (d) A record of travel expenses, supplies, etc.
- (e) A record of contributions and awards made by external entities.
- (f) A record of waivers made by the head of the agency.
- (g) A record of the training review.

Although we have an exception to the provisions of reporting, it may be desirable to document some of the information to comply with the intent of Congress.

6. The speakers heard at the conference were a fascinating contrast in communicating. Ross Pollock still shares the high opinion of himself that some others have; Seymour Berlin was properly pompous; Betty Messer did everything wrong by public speaking standards but communicated to the complete satisfaction of all.